

~~SECRET~~

18

JUN 87

CIA

TO: DIRNSA, DEPT OF STATE//FOR INR, DIA, TREASURY DEPT,  
WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM, ZEN/CIA OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS,  
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI, CDRWESTCOM FT SHAFTER HI, COMIPAC HONOLULU HI,  
CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI, CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI, FOSIF/WESTPAC,  
COMNAVFLT.

EZ1:

EZ2:  
PASS: NSA FOR ZKZK 00 DLS DE (FOR NSOC).

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
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WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT. NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE.

DIST: 18 JUNE 1987  
COUNTRY: LAOS/INTERNATIONAL  
SUBJ: ABSENCE OF AMERICANS AT REEDUCATION CAMPS IN OUDOMSAI AND  
PHONG SALY LAOS DURING 1975-1978, AND IN VIENGSAI,  
LAOS, DURING 1979-1986; LOCATIONS AND ACTIVITIES AT  
LAO REEDUCATION CAMPS; RESTRICTIONS ON BUDDHISTS;  
VIETNAMESE MILITARY UNIT; SOVIET AID  
DOI: JANUARY 1975 - DECEMBER 1986

TEXT: 1. THERE WERE NO AMERICAN PRISONERS-OF-WAR (POW) BEING HELD  
AT THE FOLLOWING REEDUCATION CAMPS IN THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC (LPDR) BETWEEN JANUARY 1975 AND DECEMBER 1986: FROM JANUARY  
TO AUGUST 1975 IN OUDOMSAI; FROM AUGUST 1975 UNTIL NOVEMBER 1978 AT  
PHONG SALY; FROM NOVEMBER 1978 UNTIL JANUARY 1979 AT MUONG KHOUA;  
AND, FROM JANUARY 1979 THROUGH 12 DECEMBER 1986 AT SOP PAN, VIENGSAI.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] THE OFFICER WAS LOCATED AT THE HOUET KHOUM (NCA) AREA WHERE CHINESE CONSTRUCTION TROOPS HAD BEEN HOUSED WHILE CONSTRUCTING A ROAD THAT WAS TO RUN FROM LUANG PRABANG THROUGH NAM BAC TO CHINA. THE REEDUCATION INMATES WERE LIMITED TO A DISTANCE OF ONE KILOMETER FROM THEIR CAMP.

2. IN AUGUST 1975, [REDACTED] AND MORE THAN 100 OTHER REEDUCATION INMATES OF THE RANK OF MAJOR AND ABOVE WERE TRANSFERRED TO PHONG SALLY (TJ 4132) TO A CAMP LOCATED AT KILOMETER-64. THE TRIP WAS MADE OVERLAND BY TRUCK AND WAS ROUTED THROUGH CHINA FOR A DISTANCE OF THREE TO FOUR KILOMETERS. IN CHINA, THE CONVOY WAS GUIDED BY A JEEP AND THREE CHINESE SOLDIERS. THE INMATES RECEIVED POLITICAL SEMINAR SESSIONS IN PHONG SALLY. THE SEMINARS REPEATEDLY FOCUSED ON THE IMPERIALISTS AND THEIR REACTIONARIES ATTACKS ON LAOS. THE CHINESE WERE BLAMED FOR BEING OVERLY AMBITIOUS. THE REVOLUTIONARY VICTORY AND SOVIET PROTECTION WERE LAUDED AND THE DEFEAT OF THE ENEMIES PROMINENTLY DISCUSSED. THE INMATES WERE URGED TO HELP IN LABOR TASKS INCLUDING CONSTRUCTING ROADS, HOUSES, AND BRIDGES. THERE WERE NO BUDDHIST MONASTERIES OR MONKS IN THE RURAL LIBERATED AREAS. THE PRESENCE OF THE PRIESTHOOD WAS LIMITED TO THE URBAN AREAS WHERE THEY WERE VISIBLE TO FOREIGN VISITORS ALLOWING THE LPDR AUTHORITIES TO CLAIM THAT THERE HAD NOT BEEN ANY INTERFERENCE WITH THE BUDDHIST RELIGION. THE LPDR AUTHORITIES BLAMED THE MONKS FOR LAZINESS AND RETARDING THE SPREAD OF THE REVOLUTION. THE MONKS WERE TOLD THAT THEY SHOULD LEAVE THE PRIESTHOOD TO JOIN THE LABOR RANKS IN DEVELOPING LAOS.

3. WITH THE PATHET LAO TAKEOVER OF LAOS IN 1975, AND THE SUBSEQUENT ABOLISHMENT OF THE MONARCHY MORE THAN TEN FORMER FAR CAPTAINS OFFICERS LED A REVOLT AT HOUET KHOUM, OUDOMSAI PROVINCE, OVER THE ABOLITION OF THE MONARCHY. THE LPD AUTHORITIES ELIMINATED THE REVOLT LEADERS. PRIOR TO THE REVOLT THE INMATES ABOVE THE RANK OF CAPTAIN HAD BEEN ISOLATED FROM THE OTHER INMATES AND WERE GUARDED BY CHINESE TROOPS.

4. IN NOVEMBER 1978, [REDACTED] WAS TRANSFERRED FROM PHONG SALLY BY BOAT ALONG THE NAM DU RIVER TO MUONG KHOUA (TJ 4132). ALONG WITH [REDACTED] OTHER INMATES [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE INMATES WERE HELD AT MUONG KHOUA FOR TWO MONTHS UNTIL JANUARY 1979, WHEN THEY WERE TRANSFERRED BY HELICOPTER TO VIENSAI (VH 1957), AND WITHIN THE VIENSAI CAMP COMPLEX, TO SOP PAN (VICINITY OF VH 2164) APPROXIMATELY 20 KILOMETERS BEYOND VIENSAI CAMP 03. VIENSAI HAD BEEN REGARDED AS A MILITARY TOWN WITH A 30-YEAR HISTORY IN THE PATHET LAO REVOLUTION. THE AREA CONTAINED MANY CAVES WHICH HAD BEEN USED BY THE PATHET LAO AS AS MILITARY DEPOTS AND FOR STORAGE. THE AREA WAS SURROUNDED BY CLIFFS. A "YOUNG STUDENTS COMMUNITY CENTER" WAS LOCATED AT VIENSAI WHICH WAS COMPRISED OF BETWEEN 300 AND 400 STUDENTS RANGING IN AGE FROM EIGHT YEARS THROUGH TEENAGE. THE STUDENTS AT THE CENTER WHO WERE NOT NATIVES OF VIENSAI WERE ALLOWED TO VISIT THEIR FAMILIES FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS ONCE EVERY TWO WEEKS. THE COURSE OF STUDY COVERED PRIMARY SCHOOL THROUGH SECONDARY SCHOOL UP TO PRE-UNIVERSITY LEVELS. THE COURSE LASTED EIGHT YEARS. THE CENTER WAS OPERATED SIMILAR TO A BOARDING SCHOOL WITH THE STUDENTS BEING REQUIRED TO WEAR MILITARY UNIFORMS AND RECEIVING THE SAME FOOD ALLOWANCES AS TROOPS STATIONED IN THE AREA. THERE WERE THREE ZIL-151 TRUCKS, THREE GAZ-69 TRUCKS, EIGHT GAZ-63 TRUCKS, FIVE ATSM 4-150 VEHICLES, THREE NEW CHINESE JEEPS, THREE SOVIET JEEPS (RESERVED FOR VISITING DIGNITARIES), AND MANY ZIL-131 TRUCKS OBSERVED IN THE AREA.

5. VIENSAI CONTAINED MORE THAN ONE REEDUCATION CAMP. CAMPS 01 AND 02 WERE LOCATED AT SOP HAO (VH 4273). THESE CAMPS CONTAINED THE FORMER ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT (RLG) KING, ROYAL FAMILY, AND [REDACTED]

MINISTERIAL-LEVEL OFFICIALS. CAMP 05 WAS LOCATED AT SAM TAI (VH 6210) AND WAS VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD FROM SAM NEUA WHICH RAN ALONG THE NAM MA STREAM. CAMPS 01, 02, AND 05 WERE CENTRALLY LOCATED, ALONG THE ROAD LEADING TO CAMPS 04 AND 06 CAMP 03 WAS LOCATED SOME DISTANCE AWAY. THE FOLLOWING FORMER RLG SENIOR OFFICIALS WERE BEING HELD IN REEDUCATION IN VIENGSAI: GENERAL ((HOUNPHAN)) NORASING, HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FORMER RLG GOVERNMENT; GENERAL CHAO (ROYAL TITLE) ((VANNASENG)) (LNU), DEPUTY MILITARY REGION I COMMANDER; GENERAL CHAO ((SAYAVONG)) (LNU), MILITARY REGION I COMMANDER; GENERAL ((KHAMLOM)) (LNU), DEPUTY NEUTRALIST FORCES COMMANDER; GENERAL ((BOUNMA)) VONGPRACHAN, CHIEF OF LOGISTICS; GENERAL ((PHEUT)) MESAIPHOL, PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE COMMANDER; GENERAL CHAO ((HANEVONG)) (LNU), DEPUTY MILITARY REGION II COMMANDER; AND GENERAL CHAO ((SENGSOUVAN)) (LNU), NEUTRALIST FORCES COMMANDER. SENGSOUVAN WAS THE YOUNGEST GENERAL, AGES APPROXIMATELY 48 YEARS, AND SON OF CHAO ((SOUVANNARAT)) (LNU), (DECEASED) FORMER RLG MINISTER OF CONSTRUCTION AND ADVISOR TO THE LAO KING. FORMER MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH CHAO ((SISOUMANG)) SISALEUMSAK WAS OBSERVED AT CAMP 05 IN 1985. THE OTHER FORMER SENIOR OFFICIALS WERE ELDERLY AND WERE ONLY REQUIRED TO PERFORM LIGHT DUTIES.

6. DURING 1985, A POSSIBLY BATTALION-SIZED VIETNAMESE MILITARY UNIT WAS SEEN AT SAM NEUA (VH 0158). SOVIET CONSTRUCTED CEMENT BRIDGES WERE LOCATED IN THE AREA

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